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*Fifty Years of New Japan (Kaikoku Gojūnen Shi)*. In two volumes. Compiled by Count SHIGÉNOBU ŌKUMA, late Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs. English version edited by MARCUS B. HUISH. (New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. 1909. Pp. xi, 646; viii, 616.)

COUNT ŌKUMA's name is closely connected with almost every important phase of the modern activities of the Japanese nation—politics and diplomacy, finance and industry, social reforms, literature and journalism, and education. Through Waseda University, of which he is chancellor, and its allied schools, he exerts great influence on the life and thought of the nation; his recently published *National Reader* will serve to impress on the mind of the rising generation the historic character of the Japanese people and the need of their vigorous progress along the definite lines he indicates. Now in addition to his marvellous record of versatility, he establishes his distinction as a literary enterpriser by the successful compilation of this most comprehensive and authoritative work of its kind that has ever seen light.

This work has been compiled with a double purpose "to preserve an authentic account of the development of the Empire of Japan during the fifty years that have elapsed since the ratification of its first treaties with the outside world", and "to make the present condition of the country more widely known and understood, both at home and abroad". To this the count adds another underlying aim, namely, "to call the attention of the nation to the imperative need of striving for an even greater advance and higher development [than it has achieved in the past], by pointing out its manifold deficiencies". The work being thus intended for circulation both in Japan and in other countries, substantially the same contents have been published in Japanese, Chinese, and English editions.

The English edition contains fifty-six chapters by fifty-four of the best authorities on the subjects they discuss (of whom six have since died, and one, Prince Itō, has been assassinated). The translation having been done by many hands, it is not free from little departures from the original. The English editor has apparently done his utmost to make the language as uniform and as readable as possible, but his corrections, especially in the first important chapter, have, while probably improving the English, altered the meaning of the original in many places, substituting in some instances misleading expressions for the more accurate forms used in the first translation. His Chinese orthography follows the imperfect Wade system and makes it worse. Also his blue pencil has struck out, not only the repetitions inevitable in such a symposium, but also a few indispensable and vital paragraphs. For this state of things, Mr. Huish may not alone be responsible; nor are these errors frequent enough to detract much from the value of this important work.

The fifty-six chapters cover, with varying success, all the features of national life in the past fifty years. It would not be practicable in this limited space to comment even briefly on all of the chapters. Count Ōkuma's own summary of the history of Japan from its beginning to date (vol. I., ch. I.) shows, in a manner extremely suggestive and stimulating to the initiated student, how steadily throughout the ages a clarifying process of the national character has been going on, endowing the people with remarkable receptiveness and great power of assimilation. In his concluding chapter (vol. II., ch. xxix.), he further amplifies the argument, and proceeds to point out with frankness the weaknesses of his countrymen in their legal, intellectual, economic, and social usages, counselling ever more active intercourse with foreign countries and higher and nobler aspirations along the same lines that have marked the progress of Japan through the historic ages, namely, lines of open and judicious reception of foreign culture and its complete assimilation to her own decided national characteristics. He condemns the racial antipathies shown by some Occidentals toward the Japanese after their late war, and believes that no other nation can achieve with greater aptitude than the latter the task of working toward obliterating the differences between races and civilizations and establishing a world-wide co-operation within one large organic and sympathetic system of civilization. For, says he in conclusion, Japan "has already won a position that entitles it to represent the civilization of the Orient, and now the lot falls to it to introduce the civilization of the Occident to the Orient. . . . On her devolves the mission of harmonizing the civilizations of the East and West, so as to lead the world as a whole to a higher plane" (vol. II., p. 574).

Dr. Nitobe develops much the same theme in different language (vol. II., ch. xxiv.), in so far as the modern life of Japan is concerned. Indeed, all the other chapters may be regarded as unconscious demonstrations of many of the count's ideas by specific examples. The interview with the ex-Shogun Prince Yoshinobu (Keiki) reveals some of the political motives, hitherto little known, of his illustrious ancestor Iyeyasu and of himself, the one the founder and the other the last suzerain of the Tokugawa system of feudalism (vol. I., ch. II.). Japan's foreign relations and constitutional régime are each summarized in two chapters (vol. I., chs. III. and IV.; V. and VI.). Of these, the late Prince Itō's chapter (V.) throws light on the political habits of the nation and the motives and aims of the framers of the constitution; Professor Ukita's account of the political parties (ch. VI.) is clear. Then follow chapters (vol. I., chs. IX.-XIV.) on law, institutions, and local administration, each containing a brief survey of the past history of the branch it treats, and those (vol. I., chs. VII., VIII.) on the army and navy, rather conventionally treated. The next thirteen chapters in the first volume take up the financial and economic activities, again accompanied by

résumés of the progress in Old Japan; some of these chapters, especially *xxi.*, *xxiv.*, and *xxvii.*, are enlivened with suggestive remarks.

The second volume contains, besides those already mentioned, discussions of social changes (*ch. xxiii.*), not very incisive, of socialism (*ch. xxvi.*), of charity and the Red Cross Society (*chs. vi.*, *xvii.*), and of education (*chs. vii.*–*xi.*). Mr. Naruse's ideas on the education of women may be taken to represent one, not the only, point of view. Next come chapters (*xii.*–*xvi.*) on the study of philosophy and sciences; Dr. Miyake's chapter on philosophy as usual shows his independent thinking and penetration. The chapter on journalism (*xxi.*) is clear, and that on the language (*i.*) is judicious. The illuminating chapter on Christianity (*v.*) is preceded by those on Shintō, Confucianism, and Buddhism (*ii.*, *iii.*, *iv.*); of the latter, Professor Kume's account of Shintō is brilliant and refreshingly free, and Professor Inouye's Confucianism in Japan embodies his special studies in this field and challenges careful reading. The chapters on fine arts and music (*xviii.*, *xix.*) are comprehensive but perhaps too brief to leave any clear impression on the mind of the foreign reader; that on drama (*xx.*) presents critical as well as descriptive views on the subject. Japan's colonial activity in Hokkaidō and Formosa also receives notice (*chs. xxvii.*, *xxviii.*). Baron Tsudzuki's chapter on the social intercourse between Japanese and Occidentals (*xxv.*) is perhaps the only one in the two volumes that may be characterized as light.

K. ASAKAWA.

#### BOOKS OF AMERICAN HISTORY

*The American People: a Study in National Psychology.* By A. MAURICE LOW, Chevalier de l'Ordre de Léopold, Imperial Order of the Rising Sun. (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company. 1909. Pp. viii, 446.)

THE aim which the author sets forth in the opening pages of this volume is such as to arouse high expectations. "I purpose", he begins, "to write of the origin, growth and development of the American people and to trace the causes that have produced a new race. . . . The history of the mental growth of a people is tenfold more vital and enthralling than the chronicle of their wars and conquests." In pursuance of this plan he considers the effects of immigration, climate, and environment upon the early immigrants; and elucidates the New England, Virginian, and other colonial traits, inculcating, throughout, the fundamental fact that the colonist of the seventeenth century was a transplanted Englishman in all essentials, whose evolution began promptly toward the production of a new race. Unfortunately Mr. Low's book fails completely in the one most important respect. It is based on an indiscriminating and fragmentary list of secondary works, supplemented by a few well-known sources; it furnishes absolutely nothing new in support of the